

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 237

By Cepicky

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize two-time Super Bowl champion Shaq Mason from Columbia.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly take great pleasure in paying tribute to a native Tennessean who, through hard work and perseverance, has attained the very pinnacle of sporting competition by winning Super Bowls LI and LIII as a member of the New England Patriots; and

WHEREAS, a native of Columbia, Shaquille Olajuwon "Shaq" Mason was named in honor of basketball greats Shaquille O'Neal and Hakeem Olajuwon by his mother, Alicia McGuire, an avid sports fan; and

WHEREAS, a single mom, Alicia McGuire made many sacrifices while raising her son and had a huge impact on his maturation; she taught Shaq that education was more important than sports, while setting an excellent example through her resilience, drive, and work ethic; and

WHEREAS, Shaq Mason combined his natural athleticism with the elite work ethic he learned from his mother to exceed expectations at all levels of football; and

WHEREAS, now a four-year veteran of the National Football League, Shaq Mason has played in 60 regular season games and 11 playoff games with the Patriots, including three Super Bowls, and is a two-time Super Bowl champion; and

WHEREAS, many experts considered him to be undersized and underdeveloped as a college prospect, but the Patriots demonstrated their faith in Shaq Mason by drafting him in the fourth round of the 2015 NFL Draft, and the rest is history; and

WHEREAS, an outstanding run blocker at the collegiate level, Shaq Mason utilized his inner fortitude to improve greatly as a pass blocker; now the starting right guard for the Patriots,

he is arguably the team's most talented offensive lineman, and he is definitely one of the best guards in the league; and

WHEREAS, Shaq Mason played college football at Georgia Tech, where he majored in business administration; a tenacious blocker, he earned numerous accolades, including 2014 First Team All-America honors from *USA Today*, 2014 All-ACC Team recognition from ESPN, 2013 First Team All-ACC honors from *The Sporting News*, and ACC Offensive Lineman of the Week recognition on four occasions; and

WHEREAS, Shaq Mason began his long and arduous journey to football stardom with the Columbia Central High School Lions, for whom he excelled as a two-way player; and

WHEREAS, he earned All-District and All-State honors in both 2009 and 2010 and was selected to play in the Tennessee East-West All-Star Game; and

WHEREAS, a winner both on and off the field, Shaq Mason led Columbia Central to a second-place finish in the 2009 TSSAA playoffs and the 5-A State Championship in 2010; and

WHEREAS, he learned many things from his mother, not the least of which are humility about his own accomplishments and generosity toward those who are less fortunate; Shaq Mason has given back to his hometown by supporting and speaking at the annual Great Futures Luncheon that benefits the Boys & Girls Club of Maury County, in which club he was an active participant as a youngster; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, he delighted each of the 327 students at McDowell Elementary School, which he formerly attended, with a tablet and gift bag as part of A Very Merry Shaq Christmas; and

WHEREAS, he is definitely an excellent ambassador for his hometown, but the good people of Columbia and Maury County are equally proud of and devoted to this native son and have honored and appreciated him with his own "Shaq Mason Day"; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his mother, Alicia McGuire, Shaq Mason is fortunate to share love and companionship with his sister, Dee James; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee has produced many great athletes over the years, but none who can compare with Shaq Mason in terms of completeness, both as a football player and a human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and recognize Shaq Mason for his many accomplishments, both on and off the gridiron, and congratulate him upon winning two Super Bowls as a member of the New England Patriots.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.